

MISSOURI REENTRY PROCESS



Report to the Governor

2012

Introduction

97% of Missouri incarcerated offenders will be released back into the community. The Missouri Department of Corrections recidivism rate has been consistently declining since 2006. In 2006, the recidivism rate was 45.3% for all releases and 40.5% for first time releases. The most recent recidivism rate is 41% and 34.7%, respectively for offenders released in 2010 (as calculated on June 30, 2012). Department of Corrections and partnering agencies continue in working towards reducing this rate of recidivism even further. As stated in previous years, for each new crime there is a new victim and new costs to Missouri's communities. The Missouri Reentry Process continues to work with partners to change this course and enhance reentry efforts so that offenders are better prepared to reintegrate back into the community and to be more successful in their community supervision and to lead positive, productive lives. The Department of Corrections continues to be devoted to building on the groundwork of the collaborative efforts that have taken place since the Missouri Reentry Process Initiative began.

As directed by Executive Order 09-16 signed by Governor Jay Nixon on March 23rd, 2009, the Missouri Department of Corrections continues to lead an interagency steering team for the Missouri Reentry Process.

The Missouri Reentry Process Steering Team meets regularly to work toward integrating successful offender reentry principles and practices into state agencies and communities throughout Missouri, resulting in partnerships that enhance offender self-sufficiency, reduce recidivism, and improve public safety. The report to follow provides the history of the Missouri Reentry Process, a summary of the accomplishments made through collaborative initiatives in 2012, a summary of challenges the team faced during 2012, a discussion of outcomes to date, and a brief summary of the work that the team will pursue in 2013.

History

Missouri was chosen as the first state to implement a model created by the National Institute of Corrections in 2002. This philosophical framework is designed to improve the offender transition process during incarceration in an effort to increase public safety, diminish new victimization, make efficient use of state and local resources, and to ensure offenders are prepared to be productive, law-abiding citizens.

Based upon analysis of Missouri's quantitative and qualitative baseline data, the Missouri Reentry Process Steering Team identified factors that are highly correlated with successful transition or recidivism and developed strategies to address these factors. These factors included substance abuse, medical and mental health, transportation, education, employment, housing, family, and information sharing. Data reflects that when these factors are addressed by a comprehensive case management plan with links to the community, offenders are more likely to be successful, thus, communities are safer.

The model indicates the Department of Corrections alone cannot effectively address all issues offenders face upon release into the community. Therefore, by forming strategic and tactical partnerships that enhance offender self-sufficiency and public safety, the mission of the Missouri Reentry Process Steering Team is making a difference in the number of successful offenders in our communities.

The MRP Steering Team continues to demonstrate one of the most extraordinary collaborations in state government and is comprised of the Department of Corrections, Department of Mental Health, Department of Social Services, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Department of Economic Development, Department of Revenue, Department of Health and Senior Services, Department

of Public Safety, Department of Transportation, US Probation, and the Office of State Courts Administrator. In addition, membership also includes community organizations representing crime victims, law enforcement, treatment providers, the faith-based community, children of incarcerated parents and any others deemed necessary to accomplish the mission set forth.

The Team recognizes that without assistance many ex-offenders will fail at leading law-abiding lives when they return home. This can result in new crimes being committed with a huge cost to taxpayers and their communities. Through identified shared resources, the team continues to identify and implement strategies to keep offenders from returning to prison. These partnerships enhance offender self-sufficiency, reduce re-incarceration and improve public safety.

Accomplishments

1. The Missouri Reentry Process (MRP) continues as a national model.

The Missouri Department of Corrections, along with the MRP Steering Team, has provided consultation on best practices for more than 11 states. Director Lombardi is often called upon to present best reentry practices to states across the nation. Our Department representatives, as well as other members of the Missouri Reentry Process Steering Team, have assisted numerous states in reentry initiatives and efforts.

2. MRP Community Teams expanded across the State of Missouri

There are approximately 40 community MRP teams across the state that are comprised of representatives from community organizations, local and state agencies, faith-based organizations, Probation & Parole, local law enforcement, judiciary, local businesses, treatment providers, victims, ex-offenders and correctional staff. The goal of these teams is to continue efforts to identify barriers to reentry in their communities, such as housing, employment, transportation, access to treatment, etc. and partner in addressing those identified issues, making their communities stronger and safer.

3. Implementation of the enhanced Transitional Accountability Plan (TAP) was completed in all areas of the Department of Corrections

The Department's case management tool was redesigned to allow the sharing of information between all divisions of the Department of Corrections and to allow each division to utilize the same document to track an offender's progress during all phases of incarceration and supervision.

4. Transitional Housing Units (THU)

Transitional Housing Units have been implemented in various institutions and remain in many of the facilities today. Preparation for return to the community continues to be the focus of business in these units. At facilities where Transitional Housing Units are not available, reentry services and preparation occur throughout the incarceration process.

Every offender received in the Missouri Department of Corrections is assessed and a Transitional Accountability Plan is developed to focus on their needs and liabilities while incarcerated.

The maximum custody level institutions are providing pre-release services to offenders being released from those facilities. Due to small numbers of releases from these institutions, it is an inefficient use of resources to create specific units.

5. Department of Corrections partnered with U.S. Department of Labor Apprenticeship Program

This initiative has resulted in MVE positions qualifying for official apprenticeships. Approximately 50 positions within MVE qualify for the U.S. Department of Labor's Apprenticeship Program. Since 2009, MVE has issued 376 Certificates to offenders that are recognized by the U.S. Department of Labor. MVE has 359 offenders currently enrolled in this program.

6. Department of Corrections partnered with Department of Social Services and Department of Mental Health to implement and enhance the pre-release Medicaid application process.

This process allows the Department of Corrections' staff to assist the most disabled offenders to apply for Medicaid 90 days prior to the offenders' release. The offenders will be notified within 3 days of their release from prison if they qualify for Medicaid benefits and will have access to both medical and mental health services without interruption of treatment plans.

7. Department of Corrections partnered with Missouri Department of Economic Development and the Division of Workforce Development to address employment pre and post-release

Specially designated representatives from the Division of Workforce Development visit the prisons to share "Career 101" presentations detailing what to expect, and what services are available at the career centers after release.

8. Department of Corrections partnered with Missouri Veterans Commission and the Department of Veterans Affairs

Incarcerated Veterans Reentry Coordinators provide presentations to incarcerated veterans during the transitional phase of their incarceration and advise them of services and resources available. They also assist the incarcerated veterans in completing applications for benefits and services.

Collaboration ensures incarcerated veterans are aware of veterans' benefits and are able to receive assistance for a successful transition into the community.

9. Department of Corrections partnered with Department of Revenue, Department of Health and Senior Services and Social Security Administration to assist offenders to obtain state identification cards prior to release

Historically, offenders were released from prison without identification needed to obtain employment, rent an apartment or apply for benefits. The Department of Corrections formed partnerships with Department of Health and Senior Services, U.S. Social Security Administration and Department of Revenue in order for staff to assist offenders in obtaining the necessary documentation to obtain identification prior to release from incarceration. From 2009 to this date, more than 9,056 Missouri State

ID's have been issued, more than 21,450 Missouri Birth Certificates, and more than 10,420 Out-of-State Birth Certificates have been processed.

10. Department of Corrections partnered with Department of Mental Health to provide continuity of care from prison to the community to seriously mentally ill offenders.

Prior to release, referrals are made to the Missouri Coalition of Community Mental Health Centers who link the offender to mental health services within the community where they will reside. This project provides for 90 days of medication, 90 days of psychiatric counseling and up to one year of case management to ensure no interruption of treatment.

11. Department of Corrections partnered with Department of Mental Health to implement an early intervention pilot in four areas of the state

A new early intervention service was developed for offenders who do not meet the criteria for admission to substance abuse clinical treatment but are showing signs of abuse or have been identified as having problematic use without signs of tolerance, withdrawal, or serious abuse. This service was piloted in St. Louis County, St. Louis City and the southwest and southeast regions of Missouri from April 1, 2011 through March 31, 2012. Evaluation of the pilot project indicates that the early intervention program is appropriate and effective for individuals in need of less intensive services and, as a result, this service will be implemented statewide in 2013. This will result in cost savings for the clinical treatment programs as well as reduce the wait time for those needing more intensive substance abuse treatment.

12. Department of Corrections partnered with Department of Mental Health to identify a new substance abuse treatment service referral process for high risk individuals

A new referral process was implemented in 2012 for individuals under supervision whose substance use presents a high likelihood for recidivism. This new criteria will ensure those who present the greatest risk for repeated criminal behavior and continued substance use will receive an immediate clinical assessment and placement in an appropriate level of treatment. Research indicates that high risk offenders who receive immediate, ongoing services in the community have a greater likelihood for successful reentry.

13. Department of Corrections partnered with the Family and Community Trust--Community Partnerships, University of Missouri--4-H Life, Big Brothers Big Sisters—AMACHI, ParentLink, Volunteers in Service to America and Story Link

Collaborative efforts designed the **Parenting from Prison Pilot Initiative** with the ultimate goal to end the cycle of intergenerational incarceration. Objectives included improving the quality of offender and child relationships and to develop an integrated system of service coordination that included the correctional institution and community. Wrap around services were facilitated not only for the offender, but for the children and their caregivers.

14. Department of Corrections issued contracts to local community organizations to provide reentry services to offenders

The Department of Corrections awarded \$3.8 million in community reentry contracts to local communities in 2008 and 2009. These funds came from the Inmate Revolving fund and were generated by Intervention Fees paid by probationers and parolees. Contracts for services were for evidenced based strategies to reduce crime and enhance public safety; including substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, housing, transportation, education, life skills, family counseling, and employment.

This effort continued in 2010 with community reentry contracts totaling \$3 million being awarded throughout the state.

In 2011, the Department of Corrections awarded the fourth round of community reentry contracts, consisting of approximately \$1.8 million dollars, to 40 community based agencies across the state. In FY12 (Round 4) the appropriation for community reentry contracts was changed from being supported by the Inmate Revolving Fund to General Revenue, and was reduced from \$3,000,000 to \$2,000,000 with awarded contracts made in amounts of up to \$50,000.

In 2012, the Department of Corrections awarded the fifth round of community reentry contracts, consisting of approximately \$1.8 million dollars, to 39 community based agencies across the state.

The purpose of the community reentry contracts is to address the needs of individuals under the supervision of Probation and Parole by providing the tools they need to be successful, law-abiding citizens. The Missouri Department of Corrections has contracted with the Institute of Public Policy, Truman School of Public Affairs at the University of Missouri since the inception of the Initiative. The MU team serves as the funding managers and evaluators of the community reentry funding initiative. The MU team also provides technical assistance and guidance to agencies from the initial award through final reporting. Completed evaluations have shown promising outcomes towards reduced recidivism and enhanced public safety.

15. Department of Corrections contracts with Kansas City Crime Commission

Contracted services provide post-release wrap around services to offenders returning to the Kansas City area. These services include goal plans that support the Transitional Accountability Plan, one-on-one assistance from experienced case managers, access to classroom training to assist with personal goals, information and referral to meet basic needs and personal goals, and staffing with Parole officers, the participant, the Kansas City Police Department, Second Chance Staff, and other relevant parties.

16. Department of Corrections partnered with Department of Social Services, Family and Community Trust (FACT) and ARCHS for sponsorship of the annual Missouri Reentry Conferences

Positive and productive working relationships among the Department of Social Services, Family and Community Trust, ARCHS and Department of Corrections continue to enhance efforts in developing, promoting and presenting the annual MRP conference. Even though a number of community based organizations and state agencies have been severely impacted by the economy, attendance figures show

320 for 2009, 300 for 2010, 400 for 2011 and 350 for 2012. Feedback and evaluations of this conference indicate great satisfaction with the training opportunities, presentations that have been offered and networking that occurs to increase reentry efforts in our state.

17. The Department of Corrections continues to support faith-based reentry programs as an option for interested offenders

Due to deficiencies in private funding nationwide, the previous program InnerChange Freedom Initiative was phased out in Missouri and a number of other states. This agenda continues to be supported through the Beauty for Ashes program and the Prisoner Discipleship Community program. Both of these programs include pre and post-release case management which include support networks within the outside faith based communities.

18. The Department of Corrections has initiated an Offender Video Resume Project

Completion of video resumes prior to release will assist the offender in obtaining employment. This project is currently in the developmental stage. The Division of Workforce Development is exploring the possibility of partnering with DOC in the Video Resume Project in order to provide further opportunities for offender employment upon release.

CHALLENGES

While the Missouri Reentry Process continues to develop important collaborative relationships within local communities and state agencies, significant barriers and hurdles remain in the areas of offender employment, housing, medical issues, transportation and treatment needs. Through the strategic work of the MRP Steering Team, new goals are being established which are designed to overcome challenges and break new ground in reentry.

1. One of the most recent identified challenges facing the MRP Steering Team is the development of a new marketing plan. The successful establishment and development of collaborative relationships with state agencies, community organizations and the faith-based community has been a hallmark of successful reentry efforts in Missouri. The current challenge, however, is changing the culture around reentry. The Missouri Reentry Process is a shared responsibility of offenders, their families, community agencies, state agencies and Missouri, as a whole. By educating and engaging these entities, the Missouri Reentry Process enhances both offender success and public safety. A new reentry marketing plan will promote efforts for successful offender reintegration.
2. Continued growth and sustainability of local and regional reentry teams is a challenge that the MRP Steering Team faces. The MRP Steering Team must be involved in assisting local reentry teams in gaining member participation and in the expansion of community resources. Assisting these reentry teams in making connections and developing collaborative relationships locally is crucial to success in the field of reentry. The MRP Steering Team must also facilitate the sharing of best practices between regions. Facilitating the exchange of these ideas can only improve the quality of reentry in the State of Missouri.

3. The current economic climate remains to be a challenge to all stakeholders. The MRP Steering Team must develop goals which address the criminogenic needs of offenders and the economic climate in our state. An offender seeking to reenter society must secure sustainable employment, stable housing, consistent and affordable transportation, as well as fulfill medical and treatment needs. The current economy makes meeting these needs difficult. The MRP Steering Team must continue to work with stakeholders to create opportunities for offenders reentering Missouri communities.
4. The inability to share information electronically with our partnering state agencies continues to present barriers. As mentioned in the past, offenders who are under supervision of the Department of Corrections are also receiving or have received services from our partnering agencies. Duplicate efforts continue to occur in the assessment and planning stages when agencies cannot effectively share information. Information sharing is hindered due to advanced technological recourse and databases not being compatible. The MRP Steering team will continue to work on individual strategies to address these challenges.
5. Fiscal challenges continue to be present. Resources available to provide education, vocational training, employability skills training, and necessary substance abuse treatment, and mental health services to offenders while incarcerated, while on community supervision and after completion of their sentences are vital for successful reentry back into society. The consequences of the economic decline on the Department of Corrections and partnering agencies impacted offender reentry efforts. The MRP Steering team will continue to pursue problem solving techniques to overcome these fiscal barriers in order to sustain and restore various resource and treatment options.

Outcome Measures

An outcome study of offenders released after spending five months or more in a Transitional Housing Unit where intense pre-release services are provided is completed annually by the Department of Corrections Research Unit. The studies have found that since the reentry process began in 2005, the two year recidivism rate of offenders who complete the reentry process in Transitional Housing Units is 38.8% compared to 42.6% by offenders who do not complete the full reentry process. In fiscal year 2012 there were 2,504 offenders released after completing the reentry process in a transitional housing unit. For all offenders who complete the reentry process the average reduction in recidivism is 3.8% after two years. For high risk parole violators who complete the reentry process, the average reduction in recidivism after completing the reentry process is 6.2%. These data again affirm that the services are more impactful for those who have had more challenges to success and indicate that the offenders who are receiving the transitional services are not committing new crimes and are not receiving violations while on parole at the rate of those who are not receiving these services. Since the reentry process began there have been 17,967 offenders released after completing the reentry process. With an average reduction in recidivism of 3.8% that means that 681 offenders have been diverted from a prison stay because of the reentry process.

Goals for 2013

1. The MRP Steering Team will seek to further identify best practices and promote those at the regional and local levels.
2. Update and continue data reviews to ensure the Missouri Reentry Process is successfully reducing recidivism.
3. Continue to further identify barriers to reentry and recommend system, policy and practice reforms to make reentry more successful for individuals returning home from incarceration and/or community supervision with the Missouri Department of Corrections.
4. Develop new reentry curriculum, through collaboration with the Division of Offender Rehabilitative Services and the Division of Workforce Development, to educate, inform and equip incarcerated offenders with the necessary skills to successfully overcome the economic, social and emotional challenges associated with reentry.
5. Continue to efficiently utilize federal, state and local resources, thereby enhancing public safety and providing the highest quality of reentry services.
6. Direct and influence the quality of reentry services offered by Transitional Housing Units within the Division of Adult Institutions.
7. Pursue new and creative evidenced-based strategies, which seek to overcome reentry barriers.
8. Continue working with local Missouri Reentry Process Community Steering Teams to enhance membership and sustain collaboration between state agency and community stakeholders.
9. Continue developing collaborative relationships with state agencies, local reentry organizations, and faith-based communities.
10. Enhance reentry initiatives through collaborative work with other states and corrections agencies.
11. Continue to provide technical assistance to other states as they incorporate reentry into their Departments of Corrections.

Closing

Although there have been many challenges during 2012, it has been a successful year for the Missouri Reentry Process. We have been successful in providing more services to promote offender success and enhance public safety.

In 2013, we will continue to work with the MRP Steering Team to examine our current efforts and determine how to best proceed in building upon the strong foundation of collaboration and accomplishments that have been achieved. We are working with the DOC Planning Group to set goals and work towards creating more solutions to reentry barriers.

Strong collaborative partnerships continue among MRP Steering Team member agencies. Through these collaborative partnerships, there have been many successes in reentry efforts throughout this year. Two Second Chance in Action Grants for Missouri have continued with positive results. Through partnerships with U.S. Department of Labor, eligible offenders are able to qualify for official apprenticeships. With the assistance of the Department of Social Services and Department of Mental Health, pre-release Medicaid application can take place to assist the most disabled offenders with notification of status 3 days prior to release. Collaborative efforts with Department of Economic Development/Division of Workforce Development are creating avenues where a Video Resume Project may assist qualifying offenders in obtaining employment shortly after their release. Partnering with Department of Revenue, Department of Health and Senior Services and Social Security Administration brings forth offender ability to leave prison with a social security card, birth certificate and valid identification, which will assist the offender when applying for employment, obtaining housing, application for benefits, etc. Work with Missouri Veterans Commission and the Department of Veterans Affairs assists incarcerated veterans in learning of services and resources available to them and their families.

During 2013, we will increase our MRP Steering Team membership through collaborative efforts with more treatment providers and law enforcement agencies. We will continue to work together to review best practices, what is working well, what needs enhancement, and create a plan of action to accomplish goals that have been created, as well as new goals to overcome further reentry barriers. Through these efforts, we will continue to work with local community reentry groups and provide any technical assistance necessary to build more resources in Missouri communities that will increase offender success and promote public safety.

The next report on progress of the Missouri Reentry Process will be submitted in January 2014. Should you have any questions, please contact the Director of the Department of Corrections, George Lombardi at (573)751-2389.